

Claims 39 and 40 are allowed, claims 1-4, 6-8, 11-13, 16, 17, 21-23, 26-29, 32, 33 and 38 are rejected, while claims 5, 9, 10, 14, 15, 18-20, 24, 25, 30, 31 and 34-37 are objected to.

The Examiner has acknowledged receipt of the terminal disclaimer filed June 14, 2002, has accepted same and has noted that the terminal disclaimer has been recorded.

Regarding the novelty rejection under 35 USC 102(e) of claims 12, 16, 17, 21, 22 and 26, it is noted that the Maeda reference (U.S. 5,966,409) is not available as a 35 USC 102(e) reference against the present application, which claims priority under 35 USC 119 to EP 96402393.1, filed November 8, 1996, i.e., prior to the U.S. filing date of April 4, 1997 of Maeda et al.

The Examiner has previously acknowledged receipt of the certified copy of the priority document in the parent, and since it was in English, there is no requirement for a certified translation to perfect the priority claim.

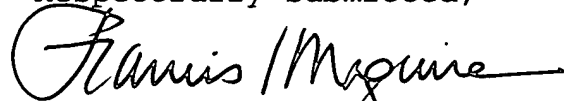
Therefore, Maeda et al is inapplicable as a 35 USC 102(e) reference against the present claims, and withdrawal thereof is requested.

Similarly, regarding the 35 USC 103 rejection of claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 11, 27-29, 32, 33 and 38, the primary reference, Maeda et al, is inapplicable as the foundation of a 102(e)/103(a) rejection of these claims. Therefore, withdrawal of the obviousness rejection of claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 11, 27-29, 32, 33 and 38 is requested.

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The rejections and objections of the official action of September 20, 2002, having been shown to be inapplicable, withdrawal thereof is requested, and passage of claims 1-40 to issue is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Francis J. Maguire", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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